



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Arctic Field Office
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In reply refer to:
FF095370
2984.01 (AK012)

PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-LLAKF012-2012-0021-CX

Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

Applicant: Ben Jones
USGS Alaska Science Center
4210 University Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Proposed Action: Non-intrusive vegetation, lake and atmospheric research in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) (2984.01).

Description of Proposed Action: The applicant Ben Jones, with the USGS Alaska Science Center, has requested authorization for access and landing by a floatplane and helicopter on lands and waterways within the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) in support of vegetation, lake and atmospheric research. The applicant has had NPR-A permits for similar work in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011.

The project is scheduled to occur in two phases. From June 20 until June 26, 2012, vegetation research will be conducted in which previously burned sites would be visited in order to assess impacts to the vegetation and near surface permafrost. The researchers would conduct short vegetation transect surveys and topographic land surveys between the Meade River and the Ketik River in the Western Foothills of the NPRA. The total number of researchers would range between three and seven, with primary access by floatplane. A helicopter would be used for two days at approximately seven locations. A remote field camp in support of the activity would be located along the upper reaches of the Meade River approximately 50 miles south of Atkasuk. The camp location is 70.055207°, -157.167040°

The second phase of the project would occur from August 12 until August 25, 2012 and would consist of site visits to lakes instrumented in April 2012 to download data loggers collecting atmospheric information and measure water parameters along two roughly north to south transects of lakes in the NPR-A. The western transect ("Team B") begins in Barrow and runs south to the foothills, a distance of roughly 90 miles. The eastern transect ("Team A") begins

around the Ikpihpuk Delta and Teshekpuk lake region and runs south to Umiat, a distance of roughly 110 miles. Along each transect there would be 4 hubs where a meteorological station would be positioned and six lakes within a radius of 5-10 miles would be instrumented with small buoys that would measure various water quality and quantity variables. A more comprehensive TIDAS buoy configuration would be placed in three lakes (these would only be deployed in the summer and located near Barrow, Atqasuk, and Inigok). Two teams of researchers would be established to work on two primary areas. The first team would include four researchers and would focus on the eastern transect area. Camps for the four researchers would be established at Umiat, Inigok and at the Teshekpuk NARL cabin. The second team would focus on the western transect area, and the researchers would stay in Barrow and Atqasuk. Access to the sites would be by floatplane. No remote fuel caches would be necessary for the project.

Lat/Long of instrumented lakes to be accessed by Team A:

Site Type	Site Name	Lat(Dd)	Lon(Dd)	Township	Range	Section
Lake	IKP 001	70.790	-154.451	17N	10W	35
Lake	IKP 002	70.794	-154.518	17N	10W	28
Lake	IKP 003	70.812	-154.360	17N	09W	19
Lake	INI 001	69.998	-153.070	08N	05W	35
Lake	INI 002	69.976	-152.876	07N	04W	10
Lake	INI 003	69.964	-152.949	07N	04W	17
Lake	INI 004	70.011	-153.154	08N	05W	33
Lake	INI 005	70.019	-153.188	08N	05W	29
Lake	INI 006	70.219	-153.172	10N	05W	16
Lake	TES 001	70.761	-153.561	16N	07W	12
Lake	TES 002	70.790	-153.472	17N	06W	33
Lake	TES 003	70.770	-153.022	16N	04W	6
Lake	TES 004	70.642	-153.668	15N	07W	22
Lake	TES 005	70.752	-153.866	16N	08W	11
Lake	TES 006	70.786	-153.646	17N	07W	35
Lake	UMI 001	69.285	-152.162	02S	01W	9
Lake	UMI 002	69.225	-152.271	02S	02W	36
Lake	UMI 003	69.356	-152.018	01S	01W	13
Lake	UMI 004	69.350	-152.291	01S	02W	14
Lake	UMI 005	69.347	-152.253	01S	02W	24
Lake	UMI 006	69.281	-152.121	02S	01W	10
Terrestrial	INI MET	69.995	-153.079	07N	05W	2
Terrestrial	TES MET	70.722	-153.838	16N	08W	24
Terrestrial	UMI MET	69.251	-152.204	02S	01W	20

Lat/Long of instrumented lakes to be accessed by Team B:

Site Type	Site Name	Lat(Dd)	Lon(Dd)	Township	Range	Section
Lake	BRW 100	71.24163	-156.77391	T22N	R18W	20
Lake	BRW 103	71.12312	-156.31664	T21N	R17W	36
Lake	BRW 104	71.19358	-156.50224	T21N	R17W	8
Lake	BRW 106	71.17556	-156.89731	T21N	R19W	14
Lake	BRW 107	71.27396	-156.49700	T22N	R17W	8
Lake	BRW 130	71.19909	-156.66536	T21N	R18W	3
Lake	ATQ 200	70.45475	-156.94790	T13N	R20W	26
Lake	ATQ 201	70.32723	-156.80655	T11N	R19W	7
Lake	ATQ 204	70.37249	-156.96270	T12N	R20W	21
Lake	ATQ 205	70.37770	-156.92665	T12N	R20W	22
Lake	ATQ 206	70.41557	-156.98128	T12N	R20W	4
Lake	ATQ 207	70.32911	-156.59154	T11N	R19W	1
Lake	RDC 300	69.96079	-156.54585	T7N	R19W	14
Lake	RDC 306	69.99649	-156.52992	T7N	R19W	1
Lake	RDC 308	69.98635	-156.42445	T7N	R18W	5
Lake	RDC 309	70.02459	-156.56652	T8N	R19W	26
Lake	RDC 311	69.99614	-156.68912	T7N	R19W	5
Lake	RDC 312	69.95348	-156.63817	T7N	R19W	21
Lake	LMR 400	70.75409	-156.72044	T16N	R19W	11
Lake	LMR 401	70.79102	-156.83670	T17N	R19W	27
Lake	LMR 402	70.72825	-156.84290	T16N	R19W	20
Lake	LMR 403	70.78256	-156.66823	T17N	R18W	32
Lake	LMR 404	70.77181	-156.76813	T16N	R19W	3
Lake	LMR 405	70.77628	-156.88597	T17N	R19W	33

Terrestrial	BRW Met	71.22198	-156.78336	T22N	R18W	30
Terrestrial	ATQ Met	70.46677	-156.93893	T13N	R20W	24
Terrestrial	RDC Met	69.99841	-156.55043	T8N	R19W	35
Terrestrial	LMR Met	70.76425	-156.73246	T16N	R19W	2

Part I: Plan Conformance Review

The proposed action is subject to the following planning document: Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Supplemental Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) dated July 2008, and Northwest National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska IAP/EIS dated 1/22/2004. The proposed action is not inconsistent with the purposes of the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976. The applicant would be provided with stipulations entitled "FF095370 USGS Jones Summer 2011 Stipulations."

Date June 8, 2012

/s/Donna L. Wixon

Natural Resource Specialist, Arctic Field Office

Part II: NEPA Review and Decision

Categorical Exclusion Review

This proposed action meets the criteria for a Categorical Exclusion in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, D.10,

This proposed action qualifies as a Categorical Exclusion 1.6 under 43 CFR 46.210 and 46.215

"Nondestructive data collection, inventory (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study, research, and monitoring activities."

The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if any of the exceptions described in 43 CFR 46.210 and 46.215, apply.

The proposed action will not meet any of the extraordinary circumstances listed below.

Extraordinary Circumstances	Yes	No
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
2.2 Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		X
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X

2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		X
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		X

Date June 8, 2012

/s/Donna L. Wixon
Natural Resource Specialist, Arctic Field Office